

cept for the color of their skins, the careers that he and Ron Brown had are remarkably parallel over a long period of time. And if he does as well at Commerce as he did at the trade office, we are in very good hands indeed.

I also want to thank Frank Raines for proving once again that this country is full of patriotic Americans who love their country, who are willing to serve, and who are willing to make real, tangible sacrifices to serve, because the work of democracy, the work of citizenship is what makes the rest of this country move and go.

I thank them both, and I'd like to ask if each, in their turn, they'd like to come up and just make a few remarks. First, Mickey Kantor.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to J.C. Phillips, chairman, United Auto Workers Local 882, and Jim Hill, Atlanta plant manager, Ford Motor Co. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval Foreign Relations Legislation

April 12, 1996

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 1561, the "Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1996 and 1997."

This legislation contains many unacceptable provisions that would undercut U.S. leadership abroad and damage our ability to assure the future security and prosperity of the American people. It would unacceptably restrict the President's ability to address the complex international challenges and opportunities of the post-Cold War era. It would also restrict Presidential authority needed to conduct foreign affairs and to control state secrets, thereby raising serious constitutional concerns.

First, the bill contains foreign policy provisions, particularly those involving East Asia, that are of serious concern. It would amend the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) to state that

the TRA supersedes the provisions of the 1982 Joint Communiqué between the United States and China. The 1982 Communiqué has been one of the cornerstones of our bipartisan policy toward China for over 13 years. The ongoing management of our relations with China is one of the central challenges of United States foreign policy, but this bill would complicate, not facilitate that task. The bill would also sharply restrict the use of funds to further normalize relations with Vietnam, hampering the President's ability to pursue our national interests there and potentially jeopardizing further progress on POW/MIA issues. If read literally, this restriction would also raise constitutional concerns.

Second, the bill would seriously impede the President's authority to organize and administer foreign affairs agencies to best serve the Nation's interests and the Administration's foreign policy priorities. I am a strong supporter of appropriate reform and, building on bipartisan support, my Administration has already implemented significant steps to reinvent our international operations in a way that has allowed us to reduce funding significantly, eliminate positions, and close embassies, consulates, and other posts overseas. But this bill proceeds in an improvident fashion, mandating the abolition of at least one of three important foreign affairs agencies, even though each agency has a distinct and important mission that warrants a separate existence. Moreover, the inflexible, detailed mandates and artificial deadlines included in this section of the bill should not be imposed on any President.

Third, the appropriations authorizations included in the bill, for fiscal years 1996 and 1997, fall unacceptably below the levels necessary to conduct the Nation's foreign policy and to protect U.S. interests abroad. These inadequate levels would adversely affect the operation of overseas posts of the foreign affairs agencies and weaken critical U.S. efforts to promote arms control and nonproliferation, reform international organizations and peacekeeping, streamline public diplomacy, and implement sustainable development activities. These levels would cause undue reductions in force of highly skilled personnel at several foreign affairs agencies at a time

when they face increasingly complex challenges.

Fourth, this bill contains a series of objectionable provisions that limit U.S. participation in international organizations, particularly the United Nations (U.N.). For example, a provision on intelligence sharing with the U.N. would unconstitutionally infringe on the President's power to conduct diplomatic relations and limit Presidential control over the use of state secrets. Other provisions contain problematic notification, withholding, and certification requirements.

These limits on participation in international organizations, particularly when combined with the low appropriation authorization levels, would undermine current U.S. diplomatic efforts—which enjoy bipartisan support—to reform the U.N. and to reduce the assessed U.S. share of the U.N. budget. The provisions included in the bill are also at odds with ongoing discussions between the Administration and the Congress aimed at achieving consensus on these issues.

Fifth, the bill fails to remedy the severe limitations placed on U.S. population assistance programs by the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104-107). That law imposes unacceptable spending restrictions pending authorization for U.S. bilateral and multilateral population assistance programs. But H.R. 1561 does not authorize these programs. Consequently, these restrictions will remain in place and will have a significant, adverse impact on women and families in the developing world. It is estimated that nearly 7 million couples in developing countries will have no access to safe, voluntary family planning services. The result will be millions of unwanted pregnancies and an increase in the number of abortions.

Finally, the bill contains a number of other objectionable provisions. Some of the most problematic would: (1) abruptly terminate the Agency for International Development's housing guaranty (HG) program, as well as abrogate existing HG agreements, except for South Africa, and prohibit foreign assistance to any country that fails to make timely payments or reimbursements on HG loans; (2) hinder negotiations aimed at resolving the plight of Vietnamese boat people; (3) unduly

restrict the ability of the United States to participate in the United Nations Human Rights Committee; and (4) extend provisions of the Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act that I have objected to in the past. I am also concerned that the bill, by restricting the time period during which economic assistance funds can be expended for longer-term development projects, would diminish the effectiveness of U.S. assistance programs.

In returning H.R. 1561, I recognize that the bill contains a number of important authorities for the Department of State and the United States Information Agency. In its current form, however, the bill is inconsistent with the decades-long tradition of bipartisanship in U.S. foreign policy. It unduly interferes with the constitutional prerogatives of the President and would seriously impair the conduct of U.S. foreign affairs.

For all these reasons, I am compelled to return H.R. 1561 without my approval.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
April 12, 1996.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting Proposed Budget Rescissions

April 12, 1996

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report 10 proposed rescissions of budgetary resources, totaling \$400.4 million. These rescission proposals affect the Department of Defense.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.